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Press Release

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Attorney General Darrell McGraw Awards Funding to Monongalia County Truancy Task Force for Truancy Center from the Purdue Pharma Settlement Funds

Charleston - Attorney General Darrell McGraw today announced the distribution of ten thousand dollars to the Mountaineer Boys N' Girls Club for use by the Monongalia County Truancy Task Force. The Truancy Center focuses on increasing attendance in schools in Monongalia County. This money comes from the third installment in the ten million dollar settlement with Purdue Pharma, the manufacturer of the drug Oxycontin.

The Monongalia Truancy Task Force began in 1998 as a partnership between the Mountaineer Boys and Girls Club of Morgantown, Monongalia County Board of Education, Morgantown Area Youth Service Project, Probation Office, Monongalia County Prosecuting Attorney, DHHR, local law enforcement, as well as the Teen, Magistrate, and Circuit Courts. This extraordinary level of cooperation was begun with the understanding that truant students have a higher risk of drug and alcohol abuse, academic failure, violence, and gang activity.

The Truancy Center provides a safe harbor for a child suspected of truancy. Truant students receive counseling on substance abuse. Center personnel look to identify reasons for the students' absence from school. As well, the Truancy Center staff seeks to engage parents or guardians in a process that encourages the student to attend school. The Truancy Center monitors student's attendance for 30 days after coming to the center.

"Programs like the Monongalia County Truancy Task Force provide our children with a second chance and give them an opportunity to get on the right path. Truancy is has been referred to as the 'first step in a lifetime of problems'. This center helps students see the downside of skipping school and shields them from things such as substance abuse and crime", said McGraw.

Purdue Pharma settlement agreed to pay West Virginia ten-million dollars over four years. The bulk of the money including the one-million dollars from this year's distribution has been used to operate Day Report Centers across West Virginia and help communities fight the scourge of drug abuse that can wreck a community. This funding will serve more than twenty counties across West Virginia.